



NEWS RELEASE

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ARMY AND USDA SIGN PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

WASHINGTON, July 7, 2005—During a ceremony today at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) (OASA-CW) signed a partnership agreement to improve management of the nation's water and related natural resources. NRCS Chief Bruce Knight and George S. Dunlop, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army, signed the agreement.

"This partnership reaffirms the commitment of USDA and the Department of the Army to work together to support cooperative conservation activities that impact wetlands and water resources and protect the nation's watersheds," said Knight.

The partnership agreement will enable NRCS and OASA-CW, through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) Civil Works mission, to work together in areas of mutual interest including wetlands conservation compliance and regulation; wetland creation, restoration and enhancement; natural disaster recovery; and watershed planning and implementation.

The two agencies established the following partnership goals:

- To express mutual commitment to comprehensive water and related natural resources management and conservation in support of Executive Order 13352 on "Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation."
- To create and support three national teams to review existing authorities and programs, identify areas of concern and need for increased collaboration, and support implementation of actions identified for: watershed planning and implementation; wetland creation, restoration, and enhancement; and natural disaster recovery.
- To coordinate other programs and activities including Wetland Conservation Compliance and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.
- To support and encourage the establishment of six to ten field implementation teams to serve as pilot activities for implementing innovations, removing impediments to the NRCS/USACE partnership, and engaging and supporting local leadership in solving water and related natural resources problems.

Additional information on NRCS is available at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov> and on USACE at <http://www.usace.army.mil>.

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